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On Traces of Buddhism in Dinájpur and Bagurá (Bogra).—By E. VESEY WESTMACOTT, B. C. S., F. R. G. S., Member of the Bengal Asiatic and Royal Asiatic Societies.

(With a plate.)

I cannot tell what may have been the original position of this little pillar, which was brought to me from the neighbourhood of Potnítalá in Dinájpur. The other three sides are similarly carved to the one which I have drawn, but contain no inscription. From its size I should think that it was a votive offering, set up in a temple or in the court yard of a temple. The Buddhism of the giver is plain, not only from the carving, which represents Buddha teaching the law, with hand uplifted, but from the lower of the two inscriptions, which is the well known Buddhist formula, '*ye dharmma hetu prabhava hetu, etc., etc.*' "Of all things proceeding from cause hath Tathágata explained the causes. The great Sramana hath likewise explained the causes of the cessation of existence." The upper inscription I am not Sanskrit scholar enough to read. It seems to give the name of the person who presented 'this stone made pillar', but to contain no date. The character is in that stage of progress towards modern Bengali, which we find in use in the eleventh century of the Christian era. It is more modern than that of the Ámgáchhí copperplate, engraved in the reign of Vighraha Pál, and I should fix its date at the period of one of the last of the Pál kings, a dynasty whose Buddhism is well known. The pillar was probably intended to represent a Buddhist *stupa*, and before it was broken, probably bore three umbrellas, one above another.

In all south-eastern Dinájpur, and the neighbouring parts of Bogra, remains of Buddhism and of the Buddhist Pál kings are numerous. It was in this neighbourhood that in the seventh century the Chinese pilgrim Hiouen-Thsang found the Buddhist court of Paundra-Varddhana, which I identify with Varddhana-kúṭi, the residence of a very ancient family, close to Govindganj, on the Karatoya. Mr. Fergusson, in his paper on Hiouen-Thsang, quotes from an account of Pundra Desa in the fourth volume of the *Oriental Quarterly Magazine*, that Verddhana Kuta, governed by a Yavana, or Musalmán, was one of the chief towns of Nivritti, comprising Dinájpur, Rangpur, and Koch Bihár, and consequently the eastern half of Hiouen-Thsang's kingdom of Paundra-Varddhana. If the Pál kings were not the rulers of Bengal in the time of Hiouen-Thsang, little more than a century elapsed from his visit before they became so. They resided in the part of the country of which I am speaking, and may have continued to do so for some time after the Sen dynasty had established itself at Bikrampur, near Dháká. Dharmma Pál, whose fort still bears his name, more than seventy miles north of Varddhana-Kúṭi, and other Pál kings, were ruling east of the Karatoya long after Bengal had been subdued by the Sens, before whom indeed the Páls probably retreated by degrees to the north-east, and were supplanted without any great catastrophe. Had the Sens signally defeated the Páls, and violently dispossessed them, I cannot but think that there would have been some trace of such an event in history.

Be that as it may, the Pál kings and their Buddhism have left their traces plentifully in this corner of Bengal. First, thirty-two miles W. S. W. from Govindganj, in a village called Pahárpur, or 'the Town of the Hill', is a tall brick mound which was once a Buddhist *stupa*, and, so far as I know, the only one of importance in this part of the country. Dr. Buchanan has described it in his account of Dinájpur. It is, he says—"An immense steep heap of bricks, from a hundred to a hundred and fifty feet in perpendicular height, covered with bushes, and crowned by a remarkably fine tree." Half way up, Dr. Buchanan saw three large rough stones, but without an inscription; for these I searched in vain. "On the summit is a small chamber of brick, with a door facing the east and a small niche towards the west. This is said to have been the residence of a Muhammadan hermit, which is very probable. The heap of bricks, or hill, as it is called, has been surrounded by a square rampart, the ruins of which contain many bricks, and each side may be 400 yards in length. The rampart is overgrown with trees, but the space between it and the hill is clear, contains some small tanks, and indications of brick buildings, especially towards the corners of the rampart. The thickness of this would induce one to believe that the place might have been a fortress; but no ditch can be traced, and the heap, which is by far the most re-

“ markable part of the ruin, could not have answered for defence. I am therefore inclined to believe that it has been a temple, and its great steepness and height induce me to suppose that it has been solid, like many of the temples of Buddha in Ava and Nepál ; for a hollow temple, of which the roof had fallen in, would be much flatter. My conjecture is confirmed by the vicinity of the several places which are said to have belonged to the Pál family, who were worshippers of Buddha.”

I have no doubt but that Dr. Buchanan is correct, and the rampart round, I think, was probably raised, as usual in this low lying country, as a foundation for buildings, which buildings would be the monastery, surrounding the *stupa*.

Only five miles W. N. W., at the curious subterranean place of worship, called Jogíghopá, I saw stone carvings of undoubted Buddhist origin. On one slab, twenty-one inches long, was carved Mâyá-Deví, recumbent, with the baby by her side and attendants round her. With it was a slab, 40 inches high, with a relief of Náráyana Chaturbhujá, bearing the *shank, yada*, lotus, and disc, showing that the Buddhist carving had been preserved by the votaries of a later religion. The carvings were singularly perfect. In a field near the tháná of Khyetlal, said to have been a residence of the Bordhounkúti zamíndárs, who once owned all Khyetlal, I saw carvings corresponding curiously with those at Jogíghopá. The carvings at Khyetlal are four. They are set up in a field as objects of worship. One, if not two, are Buddhist, the others are S’aiva sculptures of a later date.

First, on a slab 32 inches by 14, Mâyá Deví in high relief ; the head rests on the left hand, the right knee is bent ; the baby, the infant Buddha, is on a pillow below, a small figure is at each end of the bed, and on a scroll above are ten little seated figures. This is probably as early as the ninth or tenth century.

Second, on a slab 12 inches by 9½, a relief of a figure seated on a lotus. He has two arms only. The head has disappeared. Below are two figures, one blowing some instrument, the other holding something like a scarf. I think this may be a Buddha.

Third, on a slab 23 inches by 14, is a relief of a pair dallying. The male is four-armed, and under him is a bull, under the female a lion. I conclude that they represent S’iva and Párvatí.

Fourth, on a slab 38 inches by 20, a sculptured figure, partly in relief, partly in the round, of a deity erect on a lotus. It is much mutilated, and I am not sure whether there were originally four arms or six. Below are two pairs of small female figures, and above one flying, the corresponding corner being broken off. On each side of the principal figure, facing outwards, is the well known device of the Lion, rampant on a small crouching Elephant, of which I have long tried to discover the historical significance.

It evidently belongs to a later period than that of the Buddhist kings. This last sculpture is almost exactly similar to the one at Jogíghopá, called Náráyana Chaturbhujá, which has also the device of the lion and elephant.

It is quite clear that the S'aiva worshippers preserved the Buddhist sculptures of an earlier age with their own. Whence these remains were taken it is impossible to conjecture. The only traces of antiquity near Khyetlal are certain inequalities, said to have formed the site of a residence of the Borddhon-kúṭi zamíndárs, but they contain scarcely any bricks, and appear to be comparatively modern. Near the sculptures are the S'aiva *lingam* and *argha*, and close by was found a granite pillar, which I caused to be set up at the corner of the tháná compound.

North-east from Panchbíbi tháná, and eleven miles N. N. E. from the Pahárpur *stupa*, on the banks of the Tulsiganga, is the shrine of Nimay Sháh, a Muhammadan saint of great sanctity. The place is called Patharghátá from the number of stones collected in the river. I made my way to this place with great difficulty, and my visit was very disappointing from the density of the jungle and an attack of fever. As I left the shrine, I came face to face with a large leopard, whom I woke up from his siesta under a tree. I saw quite enough to satisfy me that this formed no exception to General Cunningham's rule that the erection of a Muhammadan mosque always implies the destruction of a Hindu temple. There is a decided mound of bricks, which has evidently been much reduced by taking material for the Muhammadan buildings, which have been rather extensive, but if, as I think likely, the mound has been a Buddhist *stupa*, it must have been a much smaller one than the one at Pahárpur, unless indeed, the main part of the original *stupa* has been cut away by the Tulsiganga, which might account for the great number of stones in the bed of the river. Among them I found the head and shoulders of a colossal statue of Buddha.

About a mile to the north-west, at a place called Mahípur, the heavy jungle covers the remains of many masonry buildings, which Dr. Buchanan was told had been the residence of Mahí Pál, while similar ruins at 'Aṭápur, close by, were said to have been the palace of Usha Pál. I could hear of no traditions of the Páls when I was in the neighbourhood. On the actual spot there are no inhabitants. Nevertheless, the name of Mahí Pál is certainly suggested by the name Mahípur, as it is by numerous other names, from the tank of Mahí Pál Dighí, forty-five miles to the northwest, to Mahíganj in Rangpur, fifty miles N. N. E. from the great *stupa*. It may be traced in several places called Mahíganj, Mahípur, or Mahínagar, and perhaps in the name of Mahí Santosh, given to the site of a Muhammadan shrine on the banks of the Atrai, in parganah Santosh, evidently occupying the site of a large Hindu town. The inscriptions on the tomb are of the date of Bárbak Sháh.

I have mentioned the frequent existence of brick remains in the jungle in this neighbourhood. I cannot nearly enumerate all, but I may instance the traces of a large town nine miles south of the Pahárpur *stupa*, through which the Northern Bengal Railway, now in course of construction, will run for some distance. The only clue to its origin with which I am acquainted, is the dimension of the bricks, ten inches square by two and a half thick. I believe these large bricks are assigned to the Buddhist period. The only piece of sculpture I saw was a brick carved in relief, in a style which I consider not earlier than the last half of the seventeenth century, but the town is certainly much older than that.

There are remains at Nayánagar on the Karatoya, twenty miles north of the *stupa*, called a Rájbarí. I have not seen them, but at Bagioná I saw a handsomely carved stone lintel, six feet by ten and a half inches, and seven inches thick, said to have been brought from Nayánagar. It bore no figures or inscriptions.

Close to Jogíghopá are extensive brick remains, said to have been the palace of Dev Pál; whether the Dev Pál of the Munger plate or not I will not say, but certainly he of the Ámgáchhí plate. Bhimla Deví, daughter of Dev Pál, is said by the ignorant *pújáris* to be represented by one of the Jogíghopá carvings. A mile to the south-west, at Amári, are more brick remains, which Dr. Buchanan heard called the palace of Mahí Pál. Across the *bil*, two miles north-east, at Chondíra, are remains, which he was told were those of Chandra Pál's palace; there are more bricks at Kaṭak and Dhorol, and indeed in all the country round are innumerable brick ruins. Seven miles north of the great *stupa* is the celebrated Buddal pillar, set up by a minister of Náráyaṇ Pál, and bearing an inscription, in which Dev Pál and Sura Pál are mentioned as having preceded Náráyaṇ Pál. A dozen miles north of that again was found the Ámgáchhí plate, containing a grant by Vighraha Pál, and enumerating his ancestors, Naya Pál his father, Mahí Pál, Dharmma Pál, and others.

I think it likely that much might be added to our knowledge of the Buddhist kings of Bengal, by properly organised research in this neighbourhood. The Pahárpur *stupa* might be excavated, and perhaps that at the shrine of Nimay Sháh, unless it appeared on examination that the river had really cut away the central portion of it. I should like also to endeavour to trace the old towns, especially those occupied by Muhammadan shrines, as at Mahí Santosh; for I consider the selection of a site for a mosque by the early Muhammadans to be an indication that on the spot they found plenty of material in Hindu buildings, or in other words that the site had been occupied by extensive masonry buildings before the Muhammadan conquest.

The sanctity of Jogíghopá, and the Buddhist carvings preserved

there, indicate the remains of the palace of Dev Pál as another place likely to reward research. Besides the possibility of finding inscriptions, it would be interesting to discover the plan of those great buildings of which the granite cornices, mouldings, and pillars, and the delicately carved doorways, have been spread far and wide through the neighbouring districts, wherever materials were required for new erections. Whether we should succeed in finding any such traces of Buddhist buildings is a question I could not answer positively in the affirmative; for it appears that S'aivas have built with materials taken from Buddhist ruins, Muhammadans have similarly plundered the S'aivas, and have in their turn furnished materials for modern Hindu architecture, but I think the experiment would be well worth trying, and should be glad if I had funds and leisure to devote to it.

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*The Rhapsodies of Gambhír Rái, the bard of Núrpur, A. D. 1650.—*  
By JOHN BEAMES, C. S.

A short notice of this work has already appeared in the Society's Proceedings for August 1872, but as it possesses considerable interest both from a philological and historical point of view, it has been thought advisable to reproduce it entire as regards the text, with tentative translations of such parts as are translatable. Those parts the meaning of which is not clear to me, have been left untranslated, and I hope that scholars in other parts of India will kindly offer suggestions as to these (to me) obscure portions. The whole work may perhaps ultimately be published in the Bibliotheca Indica, but the pages of the Journal seem to be the fitting place for its preliminary discussion.

The work is contained in a little volume of 105 small quarto pages, written in rather an indistinct hand, and very carelessly copied. One line is run into another, and whole words and passages omitted or hopelessly garbled; but there are so many repetitions, that we are fortunately able to restore some of the garbled passages by comparison with other places where the same phrases recur. Some of the characters, especially compound ones, are so badly formed, that I can only guess at their meaning.

The poems are not a continuous history, but short songs or rhapsodies in praise of Rájá Jagat Singh, such as are sung by bards at the feasts and festivals of native princes, and the historical events are hinted at rather than detailed; they were evidently well known to the bard's hearers and therefore needed no further description.

Mr. Blochmann has kindly furnished me with a note on the Rájás of Núrpur and a translation of the Muhammadan historian's account of Rájá Jagat Singh's rebellion from the Pádisháhnámah. These will form a fitting